

# SPOTLIGHT ON STRATEGIES

A variety of simple instructional strategies that incorporate the use of digital media in meaningful, effective, and practical ways.

## VOCABULARY SCAVENGER HUNT



### BACKGROUND

Using video segments provides a wonderful opportunity to provide content to students in auditory and visual cues. This helps bridge gaps in real life experiences for students who have had less exposure to certain topics. To transform media from being a passive learning experience to an actively engaged opportunity, teachers can create scavenger hunts for important vocabulary. Each time a key vocabulary word is heard, students clap to acknowledge its use. This strategy allows students to focus on the most important content of the segment.

### EXAMPLE

- \* Play the video "[Team Dominator Spots Tornado in Philadelphia, Mississippi](#)" ([CDN Subscribers](#)).
- \* Review the following vocabulary words with your students: Debris, Intercept, Violent, Deploy.
- \* Explain to students that each time they hear any of these words in the video segment they should clap.
- \* Play the video and listen for vocabulary words. The first time each word is announced, pause and review the definition.
- \* After the video is complete, ask students if they heard other key vocabulary regarding tornadoes.

### CHALLENGE

- \* Select a video that matches your current curriculum.
- \* Preview the video and listen for important academic language that is repeated and essential to understanding.
- \* Consolidate your list to 4-6 words.
- \* Review the words with your students. (Think-Pair-Share works very well.)
- \* Watch video segment and have students clap each time they hear one of your selected vocabulary words.

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## DID YOU HEAR THAT?



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A single note from a song can take us back in time, and the creak of a darkened home can send our hearts racing. Though sound is directly related to our sense of hearing, it also can create mental images. “Creating mental images requires more mental energy and therefore leads to deeper processing than creating graphic representations, drawing or sketching. When students create mental images, they must hold them in their working memory while elaborating on them, questioning them, and drawing conclusions from them. The effort required to visualize and manipulate mental images creates a more permanent and more deeply processed record in the brain of the content being studied.” (Marzano, R. J., & Helflebower, T. *Teaching & Assessing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills*)

### EXAMPLE

- \* Without telling students what the sound effects are, play the following 2 sounds for your students. Play them independently of each other.
  - \* [Glass: Smash: Medium Glass Smash Crash](#) ([CDN Subscriber](#))
  - \* [Animal: Dog: Medium Dog Barking](#) ([CDN Subscriber](#))
- \* Ask students to close their eyes as you replay the sound effects and visualize what is happening.
- \* Have students write a story that incorporates the two sound effects.
  
- \* **Pro Tip:** Record your students reading their stories and insert the sound effects. ([Audioboo](#), Audacity, GarageBand (Mac/iOS), etc.)

### CHALLENGE

- \* Search Discovery Education for 2 sound effects that connect to your current unit of study.
- \* Do not tell your students what the sound effects are but play them separately back-to-back.
- \* Have your students close their eyes and visualize the scene.
- \* Tell your students to write a story that incorporates the sound effects.

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## PUPPET PICTURES



### BACKGROUND

Using puppets to learn new vocabulary is a fun and creative way for students to connect with the new terms as they learn them. By leveraging “Vocabulary’s CODE” (Connect, Organize, Deep-process, Exercise), we can help “students master crucial concepts and retain new vocabulary terms.” (*The Core Six Essential Strategies for Achieving Excellence with the Common Core*) This strategy leverages images from Discovery Education, as well as pictures of your students, to help students connect with new vocabulary terms.

### EXAMPLE

- \* After completing your unit on Habitats, students will use puppet pictures to write and act out a story using their new vocabulary terms.
- \* Print out the following images (large size) on individual pieces of paper of animals and plants from Discovery Education:
  - [Red Fox \(CDN Subscriber\)](#)
  - [Arctic Fox \(CDN Subscriber\)](#)
  - [Grizzly Bear \(CDN Subscriber\)](#)
  - [Frog \(CDN Subscriber\)](#)
  - [Blueberry Plant \(CDN Subscriber\)](#)
  - [Yucca Plant \(CDN Subscriber\)](#)
  - [Aspen Trees \(CDN Subscriber\)](#)
- \* Print out images of your students.
- \* Cut out the images and glue them to popsicle sticks, making puppet pictures.
- \* Explain to students that they will need to write a narrative about an adventure they had using at least 4 of the plant and/or animal images and including the academic vocabulary they have learned throughout the unit. This activity will assess what they understand about the different components of the habitat.
- \* Have students act out their stories using the puppet pictures. (This can be done whole group or small group.)

### CHALLENGE

- \* Select a series of images that matches the key vocabulary from your current curriculum.
- \* Have students create stories using appropriate academic vocabulary.

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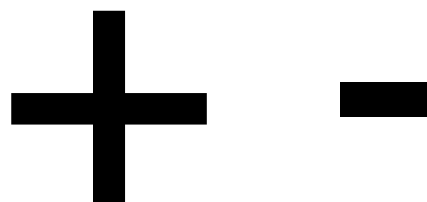
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PMI



## BACKGROUND

Trying to come to a decision isn't always easy, especially when there is no clear answer. PMI is an effective brainstorming strategy that can be used to weigh the pros and cons of a decision. According to [Mind Tools \(CDN Subscriber\)](#), "PMI stands for 'Plus/Minus/Interesting,' and it's a useful improvement to the 'weighing the pros and cons' technique that people have used for centuries." As students are exploring options of a complex decision, using this strategy with digital media can help them organize their thoughts.

## EXAMPLE

- \* Explain to students that they will be exploring a variety of STEM careers.
- \* Have students take out a blank piece of paper and draw two lines down the paper, dividing the page into three columns.
- \* At the top of each column, have them write "Plus," "Minus," and "Interesting."
- \* Explain to students that they will need to take notes as they watch videos about various STEM careers. Anything they like about the career should go in the "Plus" column, anything they don't like about it should go in the "Minus" column, and anything new they learned should go in the "Interesting" column.
- \* Have the students move around the room and view two to three of the videos from the series [STEM Careers for Students: Volume 01 \(CDN Subscriber\)](#).
- \* While watching the [Geneticist \(CDN Subscriber\)](#) video, students might find answers such as:
  - \* **Plus:** I get to help save lives. I like science.
  - \* **Minus:** I don't like the sight of blood. I don't like the lab coats.
  - \* **Interesting:** Geneticists also study corn genes; I thought they only studied human genes.
- \* Facilitate a whole group discussion about each of the careers. Ask students what they put in each column and why. Based on their PMI charts, ask students which career they feel would be a good fit for them and why.

## CHALLENGE

- \* Select a topic that matches your curriculum.
- \* Find a video segment, image, or reading passage on Discovery Education about your topic or concept.
- \* Have students create a PMI chart.
- \* As students explore the resources, have them complete the PMI chart.
- \* Discuss their findings and ask students to make a decision based on their results.

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